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JAN 2016

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BATMAN

THE DARK KNIGHT IS GOING TO DIE... UNLESS THE JOKER CAN KEEP HIM ALIVE!

EUROPA

A ***FOUR-ISSUE*** *MINISERIES*

Written by

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DC COMICS™

14

GRAYSON™

THE *S-S-S-Sensational* CHARACTER FIND--

Porky PIG!

LOONEY TUNES™ VARIANT COVER

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"ONCE UPON A TIME..."

YES. THAT IS THE PERFECT PLACE TO START, ISN'T IT? *ONCE?* IN A MOMENT OF TIME? A SINGLE POINT ON THE INFINITE LINE.

ONCE UPON A TIME, THERE WAS A BRIGHT MAN, AN *UNUSUAL* MAN. ONE NOT BOUND BY PRINCIPALS OF LAW OR MORALITY, BUT WITH A GREAT LOVE FOR HIS LAND.

AND SO, WHEN HIS COUNTRY DECIDED TO FIGHT AGAINST *INJUSTICE*, THIS INTELLIGENT MAN BECAME A SCIENTIST, TASKED WITH MAKING STRONGER SOLDIERS.

AND THE SCIENTIST MADE BETTER MEN. *UNKILLABLE.* MEN WHOSE SNORTING THREW OUT FLASHES OF LIGHT. WHOSE EYES WERE LIKE THE RAYS OF DAWN.

BUT THEY WERE NOT ENOUGH. THE FORCES OF INJUSTICE WERE TOO STRONG, BURSTING AS THEY WERE WITH IDIOT IDEALS AND IGNORANCE. THE WAR WAS LOST.

THE SCIENTIST, HOWEVER, WAS NOT. A UNION OF FRIGHTENED MEN ASKED HIM TO PROTECT THEM FROM THESE "*SUPERMEN*," WHO WERE NOW OVERFLOWING FROM LABS ACROSS THE WORLD. TO KILL THEM.

MAKE THEM. MURDER THEM. ANOTHER POINT ON THE LINE. A REVERSAL. SPINNING AROUND ITSELF LIKE A VORTEX.

AND SO THE SCIENTIST CREATED AN EVER-EXPANDING WEB CALLED *SPYRAL*...

"...AND ENSNARED *GODS* IN ITS *STICKY THREADS.*"

NEAR SPANDAU, GERMANY. NOW.

C'MON, ROBO-SPIDERS! HAVEN'T YOU HEARD OF ME? I'M ***LADYTRON!*** I'M ONE OF YOU! SAVE IT FOR THE FLESHIES! WHERE'S YOUR *CYBER-DARITY?*

HEY, TIGER! *Nnh!* AREN'T THESE SPYRAL-ISSUE SECURITY DRONES?

Ah, SO YOU ***HAVE*** DONE MORE THAN SIMPLY CHASE SHORT SKIRTS, AGENT 37. YES. THEY ARE. WHICH BEGS THE QUESTION...

A GHOST FROM THE TOMB PART 2

SCRIPT / TIM SEELEY PLOT / TIM SEELEY & TOM KING ART / STEPHEN MOONEY COLORIST / JEROMY COX
LETTERER / CARLOS M. MANGUAL COVER / MIKEL JANÍN LOONEY TUNES VARIANT COVER / MIKEL JANÍN AND SPIKE BRANDT
EDITOR / REBECCA TAYLOR GROUP EDITOR / MARK DOYLE

"...WHY THE HELL ARE THEY ATTACKING US?"

Hm. THESE INTRUDERS INTERRUPTED MY ***PERCY BYSSHE SHELLEY.*** GRIEVOUS. SECURITY?

HOW MAY I HELP YOU TODAY, **MISS NETZ?**

Shelley

CAN YOU PROVIDE ME WITH SOME AUDIO? PIPE IN THE SOUND COMING FROM MY LAB.

SCREAMS MAKE SUCH AN EXCELLENT SOUNDTRACK FOR WALKING.

KANN ICH IHNEN NOCH ETWAS?

JUST THE CHECK.

I'VE DONE MY GOOD ***MIDNIGHTER*** DEED FOR THE DAY. WHAT'S THE BEST BAR IN TOWN?

GRAYSON! CALL THE DIRECTOR RIGHT BLOODY NOW!

I'M TRYING, TIGER! IT'LL BE EASIER WHEN ALL MY CONCENTRATION ISN'T ON KEEPING LEGS OUT OF MY EYEBALLS!

I WILL NOT DIE SO IGNOBLY, EATEN ALIVE BY MY OWN AGENCY'S PETS!

SHRAK!

YOU THINK YOU GOT IT BAD? THESE LITTLE CUTIES COMBINE MY LOVE FOR MY FELLOW MECHANICAL CITIZENS AND TENTACLE HENTAI! AND HERE I AM, SCREAMING THEM INTO BITS!

SHRAK!

SOMEHOW THIS IS ALL YOUR IDIOT DAMN FAULT, GRAYSON!

WHAT? WHY ME?!

OH, HEY. ENEMY AGENTS? I THINK THESE THINGS CONSUME MATERIAL AROUND THEM AND CONVERT IT INTO THESE WEBS.

I SAY THAT BECAUSE ONE OF THEM JUST DIGESTED MY HAND. SO, Y'KNOW, BEWARE.

AND THE THREADS GET ***STRONGER.*** SOON OUR INTESTINES WILL BE TO TURNED INTO LIQUID FUEL TO FEED THEIR MOTORS.

YOU! MECHANICAL WOMAN! HOW MUCH DO YOU WEIGH?

HEY! YOU'RE SUPPOSED TO ***ROMANCE*** A LADY BEFORE YOU GO ASKING AFTER HER WEIGHT.

BUT YOU KINDA REMIND ME OF A BROWN ***IGGY POP***, AND THAT'LL GET YOU EVERYWHERE. SO, I WEIGH IN AT ABOUT SIX HUNDRED POUNDS.

THAT SHOULD BE ENOUGH.

SHRAK!

BABY GOT BACK.

INDEED.

HERE IT IS. ALL OF IT.

WE HAVE BUT A SECOND BEFORE THEY DETECT OUR BODY HEAT.

CHK TIK TAK CHK

WE NEED A DEFENSIBLE POSITION. OR...

Sigh YEAH, I GET IT. THIS IS TOTALLY GONNA GET ME KICKED OUT OF ***C.E.T.R.A.***

Ahem... THAT'S ***CYBORGS FOR THE ETHICAL TREATMENT OF ROBOT ANIMALS***, FOR YOU SKINJOBS.

SHRAK!

GRAYSON IS USELESS AS EVER. NOW. WE MUST BE PREPARED FOR THE NEXT WAVE.

LADYTRON? YOU ARE AN ***ALGORITHM*** MODEL, YES?

THAT'S WHAT IS SAYS ON MY HINDER. AND YOU CAN CALL ME ***MAXINE.***

I'M JUST GOING TO KILL YOU LATER ANYWAY.

MAXINE. YOUR TYPE WAS DESIGNED TO FIGHT AGAINST OTHER ROBOT SOLDIERS. YOU ARE POWERED BY A SMALL REACTOR.

SHUT DOWN THESE MACHINES SO WE CAN CONTINUE TO BATTLE EACH OTHER AS INTENDED.

FOCUS YOUR REACTOR'S ENERGY TO CREATE A SMALL BUT POWERFUL *NUCLEAR ELECTRO-MAGNETIC PULSE.*

-Sigh- *AGENT ZERO. LUKA NETZ...* I NEED IT ALL, TIGER.

I'M SORRY. AGAIN.

KRAK

GRAYSON. YOU...

...BASTARD.

THOK!

AT LEAST IT WAS SOMETHING OTHER THAN "IDIOT."

USUALLY I DON'T GO FOR YOU ***MEAT-TYPES***, BUT THAT WAS SO COLD-HEARTED, YOU'RE GIVING ME AN "OILY."

nhgh.

I HAD TO. AN ***EMP*** WOULD ERASE THE INFORMATION I NEED FROM THESE COMPUTERS AND--

Ah, FORGET IT. IT EVEN CONFUSES ***ME.***

HYPNOS ENGAGED.

MAXINE. ISN'T THIS A NICE PLACE?

SO WARM AND COMFORTABLE...

YOU SHOULD HAVE SEEN HIM THEN. THE YOUNG SCIENTIST. *AGENT ZERO.*

THE SMASHER OF "HEROES." HE AND *SPYRAL* CONTROLLED AND DELUDED MINDS. MANIPULATED MEN AND NATIONS.

BROUGHT THE ANGELS *FLAMING* TO THE EARTH.

HE WAS SO POWERFUL. SO CONFIDENT.

SO UTTERLY *BORED.*

FOR YOU SEE, DURING THE FIRST WAR, HE HAD COME TO SEE THAT ALL BATTLES COME TO AN END. ALL BECOME THEIR OWN ENEMIES. ALL EVENTUALLY *DESTROY* WHAT THEY ONCE CREATED.

AGENT ZERO REALIZED HE MUST KEEP THE WAR FROM *EVER* ENDING. HE HAD TO FIND NEW ENEMIES. CHALLENGE *HIMSELF* TO BECOME A NEW ENEMY.

SO HE CREATED A *LEVIATHAN.* A BEAST TO CHALLENGE SPYRAL. CRUEL. TOO LARGE TO FATHOM. A BLACK SHAPE BENEATH THE SURFACE.

THE SECRET ARMY CALLED LEVIATHAN WOULD BE THE MODERN GRENDEL. THE *ANTITHESIS* OF THE AGE. IT WOULD BE ANTI-CAPITALIST. ANTI-FREEDOM. ANTI-GOD. ANTI-MAN.

NOTHING WOULD BE BELOW LEVIATHAN'S ACTIONS. *MASS MURDER. GENOCIDE.*

LEVIATHAN WOULD BE SO INSIDIOUS AS TO CREATE *CHILD SOLDIERS.* IT WOULD HARVEST LITTLE GIRLS WITH GRIM REAPER FACES.

IT WOULD BE THE *PERFECT* VILLAIN. EVER EVOLVING. IT WOULD CHANGE SPYRAL AS SPYRAL CHANGED IT. A SCULPTURE SCULPTING ITS SCULPTOR.

AROUND AND AROUND THEY WOULD GO. AN *OUROBORUS.* THE SNAKE EATING ITS OWN TAIL.

THE MAN. THE SCIENTIST. *OTTO NETZ* WAS HIS NAME.

THIS "AGENT ZERO" COULD BECOME LESS THAN NOTHING. HE COULD PULL ON A CLOAK OF CLOUDS AND DISAPPEAR INTO HIS LABYRINTH OF LIES. HE COULD BECOME...

...DOCTOR DEDALUS.

OH MY GOSH. I WANT HIM SO BAD! GIMME GIMME!

IS THIS THE ONE YOU WANT, MAXI? HERE, LEMME GET HIM FOR YOU.

HEY THERE, BORGS AND GADGETS! I'M ***MISTER MALEVO!*** LET'S GO KILL SOME HUMANS!

THERE YA GO. HE'S THE NEWEST THING. ALL THE LITTLE BIONIC KIDS HAVE ONE. JUST PULL THE CORD, AND MISTER MALEVO WILL TALK TO YOU.

OH BOY.

TUG

...

HE WON'T TALK TO ME. HE'S JUST LIKE ALL THOSE STUPID *FLESHIES.*

Aw. IT'S OKAY, MAXI. IT'S NOT THAT HE DOESN'T *LIKE* YOU.

VRRT

IT'S JUST THAT YOU NEED A SPECIAL CONNECTION TO HEAR WHAT MISTER MALEVO HAS TO SAY.

*HEY THERE, BORGS AND GADGETS! I'M **MISTER MALEVO!***

WHAT'D THE HUMAN SAY WHEN THE ROBO-TANK ROLLED OVER HIM!

SQUISH!

ARE YOU A TRANS-FARMER? HERE'S A COUPLE OF ACHERS!

HA. MISTER MALEVO, YOU'RE THE BEST.

AGENT 37. DIRECTOR BERTINELLI. REPORT.

DID YOU GIVE THE GOD GARDEN A PROPER CASE OF WEEDS?

HEY, DIRECTOR. EVERYTHING IS GOING PEACHY. ME AND *TEE* ARE GETTING ALONG GREAT, AND WE'VE GOT THE GARDEN'S AGENT TAKING A POWER NAP.

WE'LL GET YOU SOME NICE, JUICY ASSETS IN JUST A SECOND. 37 OUT.

DICK GRAYSON.

YOU'RE LYING TO ME.

YOU'VE DONE IT TO ME BEFORE. I LET IT SLIDE THEN BECAUSE I WAS QUITE SURE WE WERE BOTH SUSPICIOUS OF *MISTER MINOS* AND RUNNING OUR OWN INVESTIGATIONS.

ACCESS: SPYDER

I DON'T KNOW WHAT YOU--TALK--BOUT

SEEMS--BAD--NECTION--THIR--SEX--UT.

CHK TIK TAK CHK TIK CHK

REAL SMOOTH, DICK. THAT TRICK DIDN'T EVEN WORK ON YOUR *MOM* WHEN SHE WAS CALLING YOU TO COME HOME FOR DINNER.

CHK CHK TAK TIK CHK TAK TIK TAK TIK CHK

FURTHER AND FURTHER DOWN THE SPIRAL.

BUT YOU SEE, THERE IS AN EFFECT BROUGHT ON BY THE ENDLESS CIRCLE.

EVENTUALLY, STARING SO DEEP INTO THE SPIRAL HAS ***CONSEQUENCES.***

AS DOES THE LINEAR PROGRESSION OF TIME.

AGE IS A ***SCALPEL***, CUTTING OUT BITS OF WHAT WE ARE. SECOND AFTER SECOND. DAY AFTER DAY. YEAR AFTER YEAR.

AND SO, THE MASTER OF DELUSION AND MIND EROSION FOUND HIMSELF ***DELUDED.*** HIS MIND ***ERODED.***

ALZHEIMER'S DISEASE, THE DOCTORS SAID. I HAD THE FIRST TWO PUT TO DEATH FOR EVEN SUGGESTING SUCH A THING. BUT MY DENIAL WAS NO CURE.

I COULD NOT LET ALL I HAD DONE AND SEEN FADE INTO MIST LIKE MY MEMORY... EVAPORATING EACH MORNING IN THE SUN.

SO, I CAME HERE. TO MAKE A HOME.

TO MAKE *YOU.*

ELISABETH AND *KATARINA.*

YOU ARE MY FINEST CREATIONS. TWO POINTS ON THE ENDLESS CIRCLE.

YOU ARE MY PAST. YOU ARE MY FUTURE.

GOOD WORK, MAXI. YOU GOT PAST ALL THOSE PESKY OBSTACLES, AND MISTER MALEVO IS SHARING EVERY-THING WITH YOU!

HA. YEAH. HE HAS THIS ONE JOKE--

MAXI.

I WANT YOU TO ASK MISTER MALEVO SOME QUESTIONS FOR ME.

HE'S VERY FUNNY, AND I'D REALLY LOVE TO HEAR HIM TELL SOME STORIES.

ASK HIM TO TELL ME EVERYTHING HE KNOWS ABOUT *AGENT ZERO.* ABOUT *LUKA NETZ.*

ABOUT *SPYRAL.*

DIRECTOR. WE WOULD HAVE WORDS WITH YOU. *NOW.*

I-- YES.

WE ARE *SPYDER.* WE ARE WISDOM.

WE DEMAND TO KNOW THE LOCATION OF AGENT 37, DICK GRAYSON.

YOU. WILL. TELL. US.

NOW!

HE IS ON A SIMPLE, ROUTINE MISSION, AND I HAVE IT UNDER COMPLETE CONTROL...

"THE SPIDER SPREADS HER WEBS, WHETHER SHE BE, IN POET'S TOWER, CELLAR, OR BARN, OR TREE..."

THE POET *PERCY BYSSHE SHELLEY.* "LETTER TO MARIA GISBORNE."

SHELLEY DESCRIBED HIMSELF FIRST AS A SPIDER. THEN AS A SILKWORM. THEN AS A *SCIENTIST* AND A MAGICIAN. TRULY, WE ARE MEN CUT FROM THE SAME CLOTH.

I, TOO, HAVE DISCOVERED A MEANS TO MAKE MYSELF A SPIDER.

I SHALL ENCODE THAT WHICH REMAINS OF MY MIND INTO A MACHINE BEFORE THE DISEASE CAN DEVOUR IT. THE MACHINE WILL CONTAIN ALL THAT I AM IN ALL ITS WONDERFUL, CONFLICTING BEAUTY.

TO KEEP THIS AVATAR OF ME CHALLENGED AND EVER EVOLVING, IT SHALL ACT AS A SEER AND ORACLE TO SPYRAL. THE WISE *SPYDER* IN ITS POET'S TOWER.

ONE DAY, WHEN YOU ARE READY, ONE OF YOU WILL TAKE ME INTO YOURSELF. YOU WILL BECOME *ME.* THE SPYDER. DOCTOR DEDALUS. OTTO NETZ.

AND THE OTHER WILL CHALLENGE ME...

...AS *THE LEVIATHAN.*

YOU'VE BEEN SUCH GOOD GIRLS. NOW, LET US REWARD YOU WITH SOME POETRY.

"I BRING FRESH SHOWERS FOR THE THIRSTING FLOWERS..."

SHELLEY

"...FROM THE SEAS AND THE STREAMS..."

OH. GOD.

OH GOD.

Nnngh.

GERMANY. AGENT 37 IS IN SPANDAU, GERMANY.

HE *MUST* BE STOPPED. DISPOSE OF HIM IMMEDIATELY.

ACTIVATE THE NANOBOTS. LET THEM *DEVOUR* GRAYSON WHERE HE STANDS!

NO.

MAXI? THERE'S THIS ONE THING MISTER MALEVO LOVES. AND ONLY *YOU* CAN DO IT. HE SAYS IT TICKLES.

FOCUS YOUR REACTOR'S ENERGY TO CREATE A SMALL BUT POWERFUL *NUCLEAR ELECTRO-MAGNETIC PULSE.*

PRESS THE BUTTON, DIRECTOR! NOW!

I--

DO IT JUST FOR YOUR FRIEND MISTER MALEVO, MAXI...

SPYDER COMMANDS!

NANOBOTS ENGAGED. BUON APPETITO.

KLIK

WOMP!

ACH! WAS IST MIT DER MUSIK?

LIGHTS OUT! PARTY FOUL!

SHOULDA KNOWN GRAYSON'D FIGURE OUT A WAY TO RUIN MY NIGHT.

ELISABETH NETZ SPEAKING.

YOU COVERED MY TRACKS **AND** YOURS AT THE SAME TIME.

YOU PLAY THE GAME WELL, ***DEAR SISTER. "EWIGEN KREIS."***

AND HOW FORTUITOUS. I WAS JUST THINKING ABOUT YOU...

SHELLEY

OH GOD.

NANOBOTS DISENGAGED. MASSIVE ELECTROMAGNETIC PULSE DETECTED: SPANDAU, GERMANY.

DID I DO OKAY? DID MISTER MALEVO LIKE IT?

YEAH. YEAH, MAXI. HE LOVED IT. NOW, TAKE A NAP.

SNRRRRT...

Whew.

YOUR DUPLICITY ENDS NOW!

NOTHING, NOT GOD OR HELENA CAN SAVE YOU NOW, GRAYSON!

TIGER! WAIT!

SHRAM!

LISTEN TO ME--!

THERE IS NOTHING YOU CAN SAY, GRAYSON.

THERE'S ONE--

LUKA NETZ. ELISABETH NETZ.

HELENA.

WE HAVE TO STOP THEM ALL, TIGER.

WE HAVE TO DESTROY SPYRAL.

NEXT: ROBIN WAR

DC COMICS™

IN BATTLE BOYS DIE EASIER THAN MEN!

ROBIN WAR

A CROSSOVER EVENT

PART 1 ROBIN WAR #1
PART 2 GRAYSON #15
PART 3 DETECTIVE COMICS #47
PART 4 WE ARE ROBIN #7
PART 5 ROBIN: SON OF BATMAN #7

TIE-INS

GOTHAM ACADEMY #13
RED HOOD/ARSENAL #7
TEEN TITANS #15

DECEMBER 2015

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A CONVERSATION WITH

FRANK MILLER & BRIAN AZZARELLO

THE WRITERS OF DARK KNIGHT III: THE MASTER RACE

DKIII

How was this project conceived?

Brian: Frank was interested in revisiting this stuff, and he was interested in me visiting with him. I went over to Frank's studio, we talked about this story and it sounded like a pretty fun project to be working on together.

Frank: This is not my conception, actually—this is Brian's. I set up a realm in which Batman would operate and tried to stay true to the character, and Brian is now expanding on the storyline that I introduced. But these are DC characters, and they remain so—this is their world. All I can say is, they picked the perfect team. I couldn't be more thrilled.

Brian, were you intimidated working with Frank on this project?

Brian: No, I wasn't intimidated at all. I went over and talked to Frank, he said, "Let's do this," and I said, "Sure." It was great to be able to work with a friend.

Frank: You've got to understand, DC let me play with their toys, then Brian asked me if he could play with DC's toys the way I treated them. No egos were bruised, no feet were stepped on.

Brian, you would fly to New York once a month to talk story and characters with Frank. How was it working so intensely together?

Brian: We're constantly trying to make each other laugh. That's how we come up with these crazy ideas for these characters. There are a couple Superman bits in this book…you're going to like Superman again.

Frank: To reiterate, and I'm not being modest here, I'm consulting. This is Brian's show.

Brian: Well, you're being modest.

Frank: Shut up. (Laughs)

Brian Azzarello

Frank Miller

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